

WATER DEFINES LONG ISLAND

Our progress toward clean water and thriving nature

Walk along the beach, paddle through wetlands, hike a forest trail—The Nature Conservancy’s impact on Long Island can be found in almost every place nature thrives. We’ve accomplished so much, and there is more we must tackle together.

For over 70 years, we’ve conserved the lands and waters Long Island depends on. But today, Long Island’s water quality problems and our changing climate demand we do even more. The good news? We know how to bring clean water back to Long Island and tackle climate change to reduce impacts like flooding and sea level rise—and we can do it with your help.



IT'S ALL CONNECTED

We must take collective action to protect the bays, harbors and drinking water we need and love—for us and for future generations. The Nature Conservancy has the scientists, conservationists, partners and influence to help Long Island build a healthy, thriving future. This all once seemed unattainable, but together we are making it happen.



OYSTERS. With shellfish farmers, anglers and ocean stewards, we're helping oyster populations thrive, restoring reefs and strengthening our marine industries.



CLAMS. By 1989, local clam populations had seriously declined, especially in Great South Bay. We helped end mechanical shellfish harvesting in Great South Bay, and we're now seeing shellfish here again.



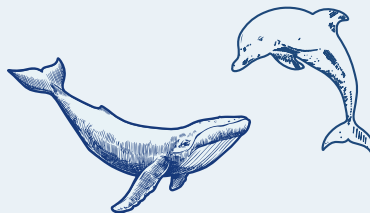
KELP. We supported the Shinnecock Kelp Farmers in expanding the first Indigenous-owned and operated kelp hatchery and farm in Southampton, NY. By growing kelp, this group of farmers is supporting livelihoods and traditions while reducing nitrogen pollution, absorbing carbon and sustaining marine life.

FISH. We collaborated to change regulations and usher in the return of important fish called menhaden (or bunker), a favorite food among larger marine animals and a cornerstone of the entire marine ecosystem.



SEABIRDS. With menhaden back in coastal waters, seabirds like osprey and Northern gannets who rely on these small fish now have more to eat.

WHALES & DOLPHINS. As menhaden thrive again in the waters around Long Island, we're seeing whales and dolphins return in remarkable numbers.



SEAGRASS. If seagrass disappears, so do entire ecosystems. Our scientists are helping seagrass adapt to climate change and withstand poor water quality. When abundant, seagrasses clean water, nurture fish, absorb carbon, produce oxygen and protect the coastline.

SALT MARSH. Salt marshes provide critical wildlife habitat and protect our communities from flooding. They also absorb carbon and nitrogen pollution. We're crafting new ways to restore salt marshes and sharing our techniques across Long Island to make communities safer.



RIVERS & CREEKS. Reconnecting streams and rivers will counter community flooding and help aquatic species thrive. We're collaborating with partners to upgrade road-stream crossings that will make a big difference for nature and flooding.

MODERNIZED INFRASTRUCTURE. Polluting sewers and outdated septic systems are leaching nitrogen pollution into our drinking water, bays and harbors. With partners and science, we identified nitrogen as the main culprit behind Long Island's poor water quality, and we're now mobilizing a diverse coalition to bring back clean water and healthy coasts.



RESEARCH. We partner with academic institutions like Stony Brook University and Hofstra University to further scientific research, and we share our conservation expertise across Long Island, New York and beyond.

POLICY. Our environmental efforts are all shaped by policy, which we actively influence. While we've made significant progress, fully restoring our bays and harbors requires substantial infrastructure investment. We collaborate with local, state and federal leaders to secure public funding and develop policies and regulations to bring back clean and healthy water.



NATURE CONSERVANCY PRESERVES. Protecting and caring for lands helps protect our water, too. Come enjoy a hike, stroll or day in nature at one of our 21 public preserves on Long Island, two of which have new universal trails accessible for visitors of all abilities.



The Nature Conservancy's successes are founded in science, collaboration and optimism. In every challenge, we see opportunity. We hope you'll join our incredible community of supporters who are working for a livable climate, healthy communities and thriving nature—on Long Island and beyond.

Visit [nature.org/longisland](https://www.nature.org/longisland) to get involved.